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# Test-Optional Policy

The George Washington University's (GW) test-optional policy went into effect on August 1, 2015, so if you are applying for freshman or transfer admission you are not required to submit standardized test scores, except in select circumstances.

This policy aligns with our admissions philosophy of holistic review, supports the university strategic plan on access, reflects the most current data analysis regarding the use of testing in admission and is clear and easy to communicate and understand. The best indication of whether a student will be successful at GW is their performance in high school—the grades they earn and the rigor of their coursework. This has always been the most important part of the application process at GW and this will not change, regardless of whether you choose to submit scores.

## Students Required to Submit Test Scores

If you are part of one of the following groups you are still required to submit SAT/ACT scores:

- Applicants to the accelerated seven-year B.A./M.D. program
- Applicants who are homeschooled
- Applicants who attended secondary schools that provide only narrative evaluations rather than some form of grading scale
- Recruited NCAA Division I athletes

## Choosing Whether or Not to Submit Test Scores for Consideration

SAT/ACT scores are an optional credential and as an applicant you can decide if you want to submit your scores to GW as part of your application. If you feel your SAT or ACT

scores are an accurate reflection of your academic abilities, you are welcome to submit them for consideration. There is no preference for SAT or ACT scores.

If you choose not to submit test scores, you will not be viewed negatively. Test scores are not required for consideration in [special programs \(/node/29\)](#), such as the University Honors Program or Women’s Leadership Program, or for [merit scholarships \(/node/213\)](#).

If you choose to submit your test scores, the Admissions Committee will consider scores in a manner that is consistent with other documents that are often submitted, such as resumes, supplemental letters of recommendation from individuals other than a teacher or counselor and interviews.

GW will accept scores from both the old version of the SAT (test administered prior to March 2016) and the redesigned SAT (offered beginning March 2016). If a student chooses to submit redesigned SAT scores, GW will consider the reading and math sections only; GW does not evaluate the writing section of the redesigned SAT or the writing section of the ACT in the admissions process.

*If you submit scores from both versions of the SAT, the scores cannot be combined into a “superscore.”*

### **Notifying the Admissions Committee**

You will need to indicate whether or not you will submit your scores on the member screen of your [Common Application \(https://www.commonapp.org/school/george-washington-university\)](https://www.commonapp.org/school/george-washington-university). If you are planning to submit your scores, you must request they be sent directly from the College Board or ACT well in advance of the application deadline. If you decide you want to include your scores after you’ve submitted your Common Application, email us at [gwadm@gwu.edu \(mailto:gwadm@gwu.edu\)](mailto:gwadm@gwu.edu) by your application deadline and include your full name and GWID or date of birth.

### **Scores on Your Transcript**

If you indicate that you will not submit your scores, they will not be considered in the admission process even if they are included on your official high school transcript.

### **Score Consideration**

GW will superscore the SAT, which means that the Admissions Committee will consider only the highest critical reading, math and writing scores you’ve submitted, regardless of test administration. We will not superscore the ACT, but the committee will consider the highest submitted composite score. We will not recalculate a new composite score from subsection scores on various dates.

## International Student Requirements

If you're an [international applicant \(/node/8\)](/node/8) (non-U.S. citizens and non-U.S. permanent residents), you are not required to submit SAT/ACT scores for admission unless you are also part of one of the groups required to still submit test scores.

You are still required to submit either the TOEFL, IELTS or PTE if English is not your first language, as indicated on the [Common Application \(https://www.commonapp.org/school/george-washington-university\)](https://www.commonapp.org/school/george-washington-university). This requirement may be waived if you submit a SAT critical reasoning score of 600 or higher, or an ACT English score of 27 or higher.

If you spent your most recent four years in a school setting where English is the sole language of instruction in all academic subjects (excluding foreign language and ESL/ELL courses), you are exempt from the TOEFL/IELTS/PTE requirement.

## Removing Scores from GW's Records

If you took the SAT or ACT in 11th grade and had your scores sent to GW, you can request to have them removed from your record by emailing [gwadm@gwu.edu](mailto:gwadm@gwu.edu) (<mailto:gwadm@gwu.edu>). Be sure to include the name that you used when registering for the test (if different) and your date of birth in your email request.

## Matriculating Student Requirements

GW will not require any matriculating student who did not take the SAT or ACT to take the test before enrolling. However, GW will continue to analyze the correlation between standardized testing and academic success. Therefore, all entering students who have scores will be asked to submit them prior to enrolling for their freshman year.

## GW's Decision to Remove the SAT/ACT Requirement

GW's decision to adopt a test-optional policy was made in response to recommendations from the Access Committee of the university's [Task Force on Access and Success \(http://gwtoday.gwu.edu/president-knapp-announces-task-force-access-and-success\)](http://gwtoday.gwu.edu/president-knapp-announces-task-force-access-and-success).

Members of the task force examined the value of test scores in understanding how a student performs at GW. They reached the same conclusion as many other institutions: the best predictor of academic success in college is a student's high school record, especially their high school GPA. This conversation led GW to adopt a test-optional policy.

We hope this change will encourage students who may have decided not to apply due to concerns about whether their scores match their high school performance to consider GW.

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